

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

February 22, 2011

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on February 22, 2011, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Committee Chairman, Dale Venturini, Jeff Hirsh, Jason Fowler, Patrick Butler and Letitia Carter.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan and Kim Keough, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Arleen Oliva, Amanda Marzullo and Melissa Masunic, RICC; John Gibbons and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Cheryl Cohen, and Jodi Duclos, DDC; Steve Habl, VMA; Michael Nugent, House of Representatives; Bruce Leach, Legal Counsel and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM. Ms. Venturini asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January Marketing Committee meeting.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Ms. Carter it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the January meeting.

Public Relations/Marketing

Mr. McCarvill noted that the date and the venue for the March meeting had been changed. He stated that the meeting will be held at the VETS on March 29th at 12:00 followed by a press conference announcing the rollout of the new VETS name and logo.

Ms. Keough addressed the Committee. She reported that calls have been made to the Governor and the Mayor inviting them to the launch. Ms. Keough said that letters have been sent to the theater's tenants informing them of our plans. Ms. Keough noted that banners for the windows have been ordered and VMA signage for the Dunk. Ms. Keough reported that she has been working with the CVB on the press kit and sales material. She said that Artlab is updating the website with the new VETS logo. Discussion ensued regarding the colors of the logo. Ms. Marzullo noted that the photo gallery that Ms. Keough commissioned has already been put to good use on the website. Mr. Hirsh stated that it will be a great tool in our advertising.

Ms. Keough reported that she has been working on an advertisement for Destination Providence and Providence Business News. She encouraged everyone to view the marquee on the front of the Dunk that is promoting all events at the complex. Ms. Keough reported that Girls Night Out is being promoted at PPAC, the Dunk and the

Convention Center. Ms. Keough stated that she has also been working closely with the promoter for the Laurie Berkner Band.

PWCVB

Ms. Venturini, noting that Mr. Schriever was traveling, asked Mr. Gibbons to present the CVB's report. Mr. Gibbons discussed definite bookings for the month and year to date. Mr. Gibbons stated that although definite bookings are up for the same period room nights are lower than 2010. Mr. Schriever said that groups are no longer arranging for large room blocks because attendees are likely to make their own arrangements outside the block. Mr. Gibbons noted that tentative bookings are showing the same trend. Mr. Gibbons reported that Convention Center related definite bookings are ahead of last year and tentative bookings remain consistent. Mr. Gibbons reported that definite bookings include the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, New England Trufgrass, RI Amateur Hockey Association and the North American Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists.

Mr. Gibbons reported that definite bookings for the Rhode Island Sports Commission include JMT Sports Travel, JAMFest Nationals, the Mustang Car Clubs and Headliners as well as several other groups. Mr. Gibbons noted that the Sports Commission is negotiating with the US Gymnastics Visa Championships and Area

Auto Racing and Convention that would use the Complex and the US Figure Skating Synchronized Championship for the Dunk. Other events that the Commission is working to secure would use various venues in the State and the Convention Center.

Ms. Adamo stated that new advertising was created for the Boston Marathon program. She reported that the CVB is developing an e-mail blast and new creative material for the meetings market. Ms. Adamo noted that a soft launch of a new iPhone app was conducted. Ms. Adamo said that since July, Twitter followers have increased from 3,750 to 4,905 and Facebook likes have increased from 5,448 to 7,601.

Ms. Adamo noted that the first Winter Restaurant Week went very well. Mr. McCarvill commented that the Summer event attracts more patrons. Ms. Adamo stated that the restaurant community was pleased with the results.

Ms. Adamo reported that CVB Public Relations efforts included the hosting of media familiarization trips that culminated in dinner in the Rotunda. Ms. Adamo said that the CVB assisted the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon on media partnerships and national media outreach. Upcoming media events are a RISD media familiarization tour, deskside visits to clients in New York, culinary media training and another New York media event taking place in late Summer.

Dunkin' Donuts Center

Ms. Cohen reported that Cigar Master had contracted this month for sponsorships or signage. She noted that Bernie & Phyl's, Monster Entertainment, RI National Guard, TD Bank and the Ramada in Seekonk are in negotiations but hopefully those contracts will be signed shortly. Ms. Cohen reported that Ms. Duclos continues to do a great job of filling the Party Suites and Restaurant during events. She noted that Monster Jam and the Harlem Globetrotters events have been sold. Ms. Cohen said that select shows of Disney on Ice are still available. Also available at this time are Lil' Wayne, Santamaria, Usher, the Circus, Michael Buble, WWE Smackdown and Disco Nights. Ms. Cohen said that with the recently announced new shows the suites should sell soon. Ms. Cohen reported that we currently have eights suites available. Mr. Fowler asked about the benefits of suite ownership. Ms. Cohen noted that the suite owner receives 15 tickets per event. Ms. Cohen said that we could offer 5 additional seats, a payment plan or other enticements as incentives to those interested in purchasing a suite. Ms. Cohen explained the luxury suite sales strategy.

Convention Center

John McGinn reported a great month at the Convention Center and said that attendance is up at the public shows. Mr. McGinn noted that the fiscal year 2011 revenue goal is \$8.5 million and that \$626,426.40

is needed to reach their goal. Mr. McGinn stated that the sales team is working to secure several meetings and events. Mr. McGinn noted that there are several tentative events that are close to signing contracts. Mr. McGinn reported that contracted events include 4 Food & Beverage stand alone events, 4 meeting and a public show. He said that there have been numerous site tours during the months of January and February for business that will occur in 2011 through 2013.

VMA

Ms. Carter reported that she has been working with Kim Keough planning the launch of the new VETS logo. Ms. Carter reported that the VMAF is working on a multicultural festival to be held at the VETS on Memorial Day Weekend. She said that the event will focus on the diversity of talent that we are fortunate enough to enjoy in Rhode Island. Mr. Habi noted that he will assist with the festival where needed. Mr. McCarvill said that the festival will be good exposure for the talent and the building.

Mr. Habi was pleased to report that revenue for the month of January was \$6,900 to budget. Year to date revenue to budget is (\$43,700). Mr. Habi noted that interest in the theater has increased and that following renovations we are confident that it will be a success.

Mr. Habi noted that there are now 116 confirmed rental days at the

VMA with 13 holds. He said that he is currently turning away Summer business because of the renovation timeline. Mr. Hahl said that the VMA will go off line on June 17th and reopen on September 21st. Mr. Hahl thanked the Dunkin' Donuts Center and the RI Convention Center for their referrals.

Mr. Hahl said that the sound, lighting and concession equipment have been delivered and have already been put to good use. Mr. Hahl said that he is thrilled to have new equipment.

Ms. Venturini thanked the Committee and asked if there was any other business. Hearing none he asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Fowler and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:32 PM